

AA-948  
Ferry Point Farm  
Annapolis  
Private

foundation Colonial period (?)  
house c. 1800-1825 with later  
additions

Ferry Point Farm is an architecturally significant vernacular farmhouse. It features an early-19th century core with an extensive 3rd-quarter-of-the-19th-century expansion that characterizes the present house. Some sections of the dwelling rest on an extremely thick (portions extend to 6') stone foundation, that allegedly is related to a Revolutionary War-era fortification.

The dwelling was built by, and expanded upon, by various members of the Brice family who owned and cultivated the property for nearly 200 years. The Brice's are one of Anne Arundel County's oldest and historically prominent families, with many member distinguishing themselves in business, politics, the military, and public service. The house derives its name from the presence of a former Severn River ferry (owned by the Brice's) that terminated near the farmhouse.

AA-948  
Ferry Point Farm

MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION PLAN DATA

Geographic Organization: Western Shore

Chronological/Development Period(s): Agricultural-Industrial Transition (1815-1870)

Prehistoric/Historic Period Theme(s): Architecture

Resource Type:

Category Type: Building

Historic Environment: Rural

Historic Function(s) and Use(s): Dwelling

Known Design Source: None

# Maryland Historical Trust

## State Historic Sites Inventory Form

Survey No. AA-948

Magi No.

DOE ☐ yes ☐ no

### 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Brice Farm/Brice Plantation

and/or common Ferry Point Farm--preferred

### 2. Location

street & number Ferry Farm Road ☐ not for publicationcity, town Annapolis ☐ vicinity of congressional district

state Maryland county Anne Arundel

### 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
			<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

### 4. Owner of Property

(give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Harriet Rich Sheehy

street &amp; number Marlow, The Green Road telephone no.:

city, town Dublin state and zip code: Dalkey Co., Ireland

### 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Anne Arundel County Courthouse liber 2064

street &amp; number Church Circle folio 312

city, town Annapolis state Maryland

### 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title

date ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records

city, town state

## 7. Description

Survey No. AA-948

Condition		Check one		Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	date of move _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed				

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Ferry Point Farm is located on Anne Arundel County's Broadneck Peninsula. The dwelling faces south and sits upon a high promontory overlooking the Severn River, and beyond onto the City of Annapolis. The house displays multiple phases of construction which results in an asymmetrical facade and an irregular floor plan. The most extensive episode of expansion transpired in the 3rd quarter of the 19th century and it is this rebuild that dominates the building's present character.

Most living space is contained within four, frame, two-and-a-half story, gable-roof blocks that intersect at right angles in a roughly cruciform manner. This basic, four-block configuration is augmented by a number of additions, including both enclosed and open porches, and a dependent garage. The building's evolution is not entirely clear, but the elaborate entrance found on the west facade suggests that the house may have once been oriented in that direction, and was possibly a center-hall-plan, I-house.

All walls, excepting those of the originally free-standing garage, are covered with asbestos shingles that obscure the original cladding. The portion of the foundation that extends above the ground is parged, though brick and, in some areas, stone construction is discernible. The roof's steeply pitched gables have overhanging eaves and partial cornice returns. Three fireplace chimneys pierce the roofline and display corbelled tops, while a fourth, associated with the present kitchen, is a narrow and plainly constructed stove chimney.

The majority of windows, excluding the modern tripartite picture window that dominates the south facade and multi-paned, fixed-sash windows contained in the two-story sun porch, are tall, six-over-six, double-hung sash types. The house features five 1st-floor entrances. The most formal of these is the previously mentioned west entrance that features a multi-paned transom and sidelights. Three other doorways appear contemporaneous to the principal entrance. Two of these are paired French doors, topped by a two-light transom, that provide communication with the east porch. The fourth door opens onto the southwest corner porch and appears to date to either the late 19th- or early 20th-century, though its older transom is identical to those found elsewhere in the house.

Notable interior features include the quarter-flight, open-string stair case in the main hall, which features a heavy and elaborately turned newel post, and fluted, octagonal balusters. The stringboard is embellished with applied bracket designs. The treads of the staircase exhibit an exceptional level of wear. The dining room retains the best preserved fireplace and mantle. The surround between the mantle and the firebox is faced with small, square tiles. Two larger, molded tiles, exhibiting the heads of classical figures, accent this otherwise plain field. Egg and dart molding and recessed panels containing a stylized leaf motif embellish the wood mantle. The brick fireplace in the east parlor has a projecting chimney breast. Its only ornamentation is a simple wooden coping that serves as a mantle shelf.

Alterations and additions make the original floor plan difficult to discern, but tradition and architectural evidence, including doors, trim, and the general mass of the room, indicate the present-day kitchen is the oldest surviving portion of the house. The building's evolutionary nature is seen most clearly in the basement, which clearly exhibits multiple phases of construction and variable wall widths and building materials. Please refer to the attached annotated floor plans.

Important non-architectural features of Ferry Point Farm House include a rare surviving example of an "isolated domestic gas machine" which is a mid-19th century device designed to produce illuminating gas for a single building or groups of buildings in areas outside the reach of municipal supplies. The attic contains internal cistern. Its wooden, mortise and tenoned frame with splined bottom measures 11'-9" in length, 4' in width, and 1'-10" in depth. This device was part of a gravitationally operated, running water system.

# 8. Significance

Survey No. AA-948

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates	Builder/Architect
Check: Applicable Criteria: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D	
and/or Applicable Exception: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> D <input type="checkbox"/> E <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/> G	
Level of Significance: <input type="checkbox"/> national <input type="checkbox"/> state <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> local	

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

Ferry Point Farm House is a vernacular farm dwelling displaying multiple stages of development. This large and sprawling building is significant for embodying building and decorative design characteristics associated with each increment of its growth. While the house principally appears as a mid-19th century creation, there also exists an earlier (probably 19th century) core, as well as a segment of foundation that may date to the colonial period. The house retains several interesting service features, including equipment related to the production of illuminating gas and running water. The site's importance is further enhanced by its association with the Brice family, who one of Anne Arundel County's oldest and historically prominent families. John Brice, Jr. patented the land associated with Ferry Point Farm in 1727, and his descendants maintained ownership into the 20th century (1). The farm's name is derived from the fact that the Brice's owned and operated the Severn River Ferry, whose northern terminus was on this property (2).

The earliest history of the Ferry Point Farm house is not clear. It is known that the land where the house now stands was part of a 478 acre tract patented in 1727 by John Brice, Jr. and given the name, "Sarah's Care for John". The land subsequently passed to John Brice, III who in 1800 requested a resurvey and new patent. This process was not finalized until 1812, by which time the property was held by Nicholas Brice, the son of John Brice, III. The new patent was for 428 acres and renamed "Pendennis Mount" (3). This tract became divided amongst several members of the Brice family. In the case of John Brice, Jr.; John Brice, III; and Nicholas Brice, the farm was supplemental source of income for these men who were principally politicians, merchants, and/or lawyers with homes in downtown Annapolis, and in the case of Nicholas, Baltimore (4).

Architectural evidence suggest the present house was probably started by Nicholas Brice. Oral tradition reports that it was built on the foundations of "Fort Nuisance". While portion of the house's foundations are extremely thick for domestic construction, this legend remains unsubstantiated. Archival research was unable to uncover any reference to a fortification by that name. A likely explanation stems from the fact that a War of 1812- fortification, Fort Nonsense, stood less than 1/4 mile southeast of Ferry Point Farm. The house possibly stands upon the ruins of an outwork associated with Nonsense, or perhaps the house's proximity, in combination with its more than substantial foundations, gave spurious rise to this legend (5). John Brice, III was a militia Captain during the Revolution, and was a member of the body responsible for fortifying Annapolis Harbor. Given the property's strategic location--directly across from the city of Annapolis--and Brice's position, the possibility of this house having some sort of military association can not be discounted.

(continuation sheet)

**8.1 Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.**





Physical evidence suggests the oldest part of the house was probably constructed in the early 19th century. ; conclusion is based upon the predominance of up-and-down saw marks and hand-headed, machine cut nails. This date corresponds with the ownership of Nicholas Brice. Nicholas was the Chief Judge of the Baltimore City Court, and both he and his wife Anna spent much of their time as residents of that city. Nicholas was also involved in provocative social concerns, such as serving as president of the Maryland State colonization Society (6)(7). This group advocated and actively engaged in the return of African-Americans to Liberia. Nicholas died in Baltimore in 1851 and Anna in December, 1858. Ferry Point Farm is identified on the 1860 Martinet Atlas of Anne Arundel County, and the resident is identified as Mrs. S. Brice.

Following Anna's death, family holdings were divided equally amongst the five surviving children, at which time Richard Tilghman Brice became owner of Ferry Point Farm. What became of Mrs. S. Brice is unknown. Unlike his predecessors, farming was Richard's principal occupation, although he did serve as a County Commissioner and County Treasurer. Not content with his inheritance, Richard T. Brice began to acquire his sibling's interest in the family plantation, and by 1881 he had achieved ownership of all of his father's former holdings on the north side of the Severn River. It is extremely likely during this period of farm consolidation, Richard Tilghman Brice undertook the major expansion of the existing farmhouse. This took place prior to the Civil War, assuming there is any veracity to the claim that the house was occupied by the Union Army during the Civil War and used as a hospital. Once again, no documentary support for this claim was located, but this does lead to speculation as to if this is the reason for the exceptional amount of wear on the staircase, and possibly the gas light machine in the basement, and protected, interior attic cistern. The Brice family were known Confederate supporters and Richard's younger brother, Charles Brice, fought for the southern cause and became a Union Prisoner of War.

Richard Tilghman Brice died in 1903 and the property passed to his wife, and then to his son, Richard Tilghman Brice, II. At this time the Broadneck Peninsula was a desirable location for development. By 1909 the immediate area was divided into 65 individual lots (8). Five of these were purchased by Edward Rich and named Ferry Point Farm. The house and associated land remains in the ownership of the Rich family.



Ferry POINT FARM  
3/17/97  
S. MARSH  
Sketch Basement Plan  
(NOT TO SCALE)

 = STONE  
 = Stone?  
 = BRICK  
 = 2'-3' high stone fdn w/ brick above

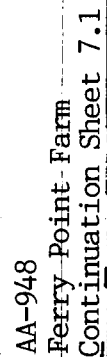
A = 6° wide x 4° high  
stone / partially stone?  
wall

- B - Joists measure  $0'9'' \times 0'3''$   
AND are spaced  $1'4''$  on center.
- Joists are circ sawn  
w/ recip. sawn? floor board?
- originally divided space?  
only portions of joists/floorboards  
are white washed
- Nails are cut w/ hand  
heads

C new posts w/ wrought nails. M+T and lapped jointed. Not original feature. Non structural

D Joists in these sections  
aren't circ sawn.

E Whitewashed joints + walls



Rechnung

2 1/2 inches  
Open Area  
Stone Wall

BRICK  
Floor

Porch FDN  
inaccessibility

$$\frac{\text{step up}}{20\%}$$

~~XXXX~~ ~~XXXX~~ ~~XXXX~~ ~~XXXX~~ ~~XXXX~~

FORN 04 dec-1978

XXXX cut out

Furn 2000

NOT  
Keyed in

CRAWL  
SPACE  
UNDER  
KITCHEN  
AND PANTRY

Poured  
conc  
Floor

related  
to Co.  
1-1-1-1?

Not  
keyed  
in

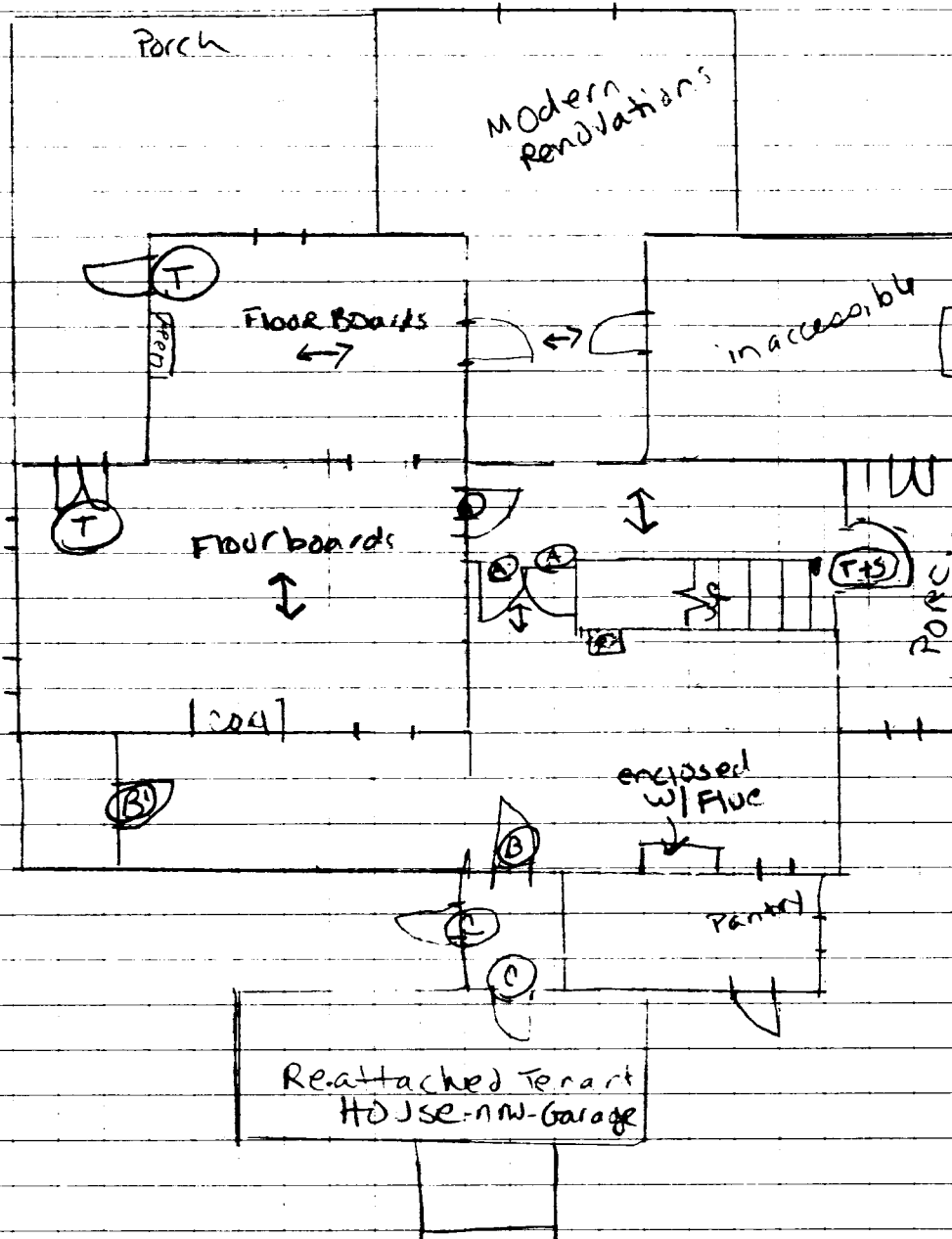
Кеңесші

## Bulkhead

North

4427





direction  
of Floor  
Boards

Ferry Farm  
3/17/97  
1st Floor Plan  
(NOT TO SCALE)  
S. MARSH

- (A) oldest Doors
- (B) tall Greek Revival era door w/ Transom
- (B') tall Greek Revival style doors, but different than (B)
- (T) TRANSOM (2-light)
- (T+S) TRANSOM + sidelight
- (C) ALL WINDOWS HAVE THIN MUTINS  
1920s/30s 6 horizontal panel door

# THIRD DISTRICT

ANNE ARUNDEL CO.

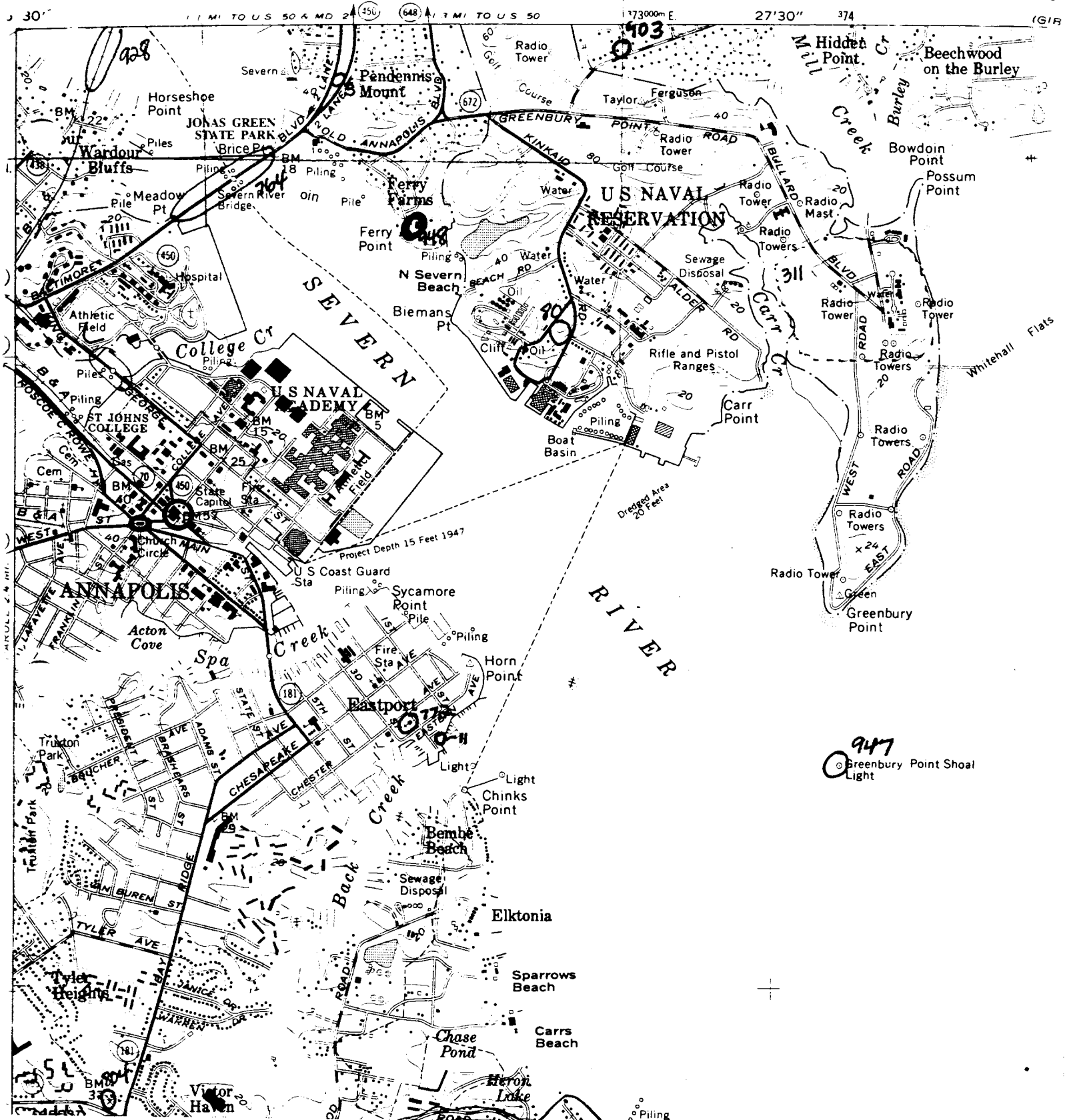
Scale 1/2 Inches to a Mile

1/2 1 1 1/2 2 Miles



AA-948

# GEOLOGICAL SURVEY



**ANNAPOLIS**  
 USGS 7.5 minute series  
 Scale: 1:24,000  
 1957, photo revised 1978

Site Number: AA-948  
 Site Name: Ferry Point Farm  
 Location: Ferry Point Farm, Annapolis



AA-948

FERRY POINT FARM

ANNE ARUNDEL CO., MARYLAND

SHERRI M. MARSH, Photographer

MARCH, 1997

NEG. AT MARYLAND SHPO

SOUTH (FRONT) ELEVATION

Photo 1 of 16



18 3'97

AA-948

FERRY POINT FARM

ANNE ARUNDEL CO., MARYLAND

Sherri M. MARSH, Photographer

MARCH, 1997

NEG. AT MD SAPO

N.W. PERSPECTIVE

Photo 2 of 16





AA-948

FERRY POINT FARM

ANNE ARUNDEL CO., MARY LAND

SHERRI M. MARSH, Photographer

MARCH, 1997

NEG. AT MARYLAND SHPO

EAST ELEVATION

PHOTO 3 of 16



AA-948

LEPP / POINT FARM

ANNE ARUNDEL CO., MARYLAND

SHERRI M. MARSH, Photographer

MARCH, 1997

NEG. AT MD SHPO

WEST ELEVATION

Photo 4 of 16



10 3 97

AA 0128

FERRY POINT FARM

ANNE ARUNDEL CO., MARYLAND

SHERRI M. MARSH, photographer, MARCH 1997

NEG. AT MD SHPO

ENTRY HALL, CAMERA FACING WEST

photo 5 of 16



AA-948

FERRY POINT FARM

ANNIE ARUNDEL Co., MARYLAND

SHERRI M. MARSH, Photographer

MARCH, 1997

NEG. AT MD SHPO

DINING ROOM FIRE PLACE

Photo 6 of 16





AA-948

FERRY POINT FARM

ANNE ARUNDEL CO., MARYLAND

Sherril M. MARSH, photographer

MARCH, 1997

NEG. AT MD SHPO

EAST PARLOR FIREPLACE

Photo 7 of 16



18 3'97

AA -948

FERRY POINT FARM

ANNE ARUNDEL CO., MARYLAND

SHERI M. MARSH, Photographer

MARCH, 1997

NEG. AT MARYLAND SHPO

ENTRY HALL, CAMERA FACING EAST  
TOWARD DINING ROOM

photo 8 of 16



AA-948

FERRY POINT FARM

ANNE ARUNDEL CO., MARYLAND

SHERRI M. MARSH, Photographer

MARCH, 1997

NEG. AT MARYLAND SHPO

Kitchen, CAMERA FACING NORTH

Photo 9 of 16



AA- 948

FERRY POINT FARM

ANNE ARUNDEL CO., MARYLAND

SHERRI M. MARSH, Photographer

MARCH 1997

NEG. AT MARYLAND SHPO

BASEMENT; GASOLINE-FUELED MACHINE  
USED TO produce gas for lighting  
system

Photo 10 of 16





AA- 948

FERRY POINT FARM

ANNE ARUNDEL CO., MARYLAND

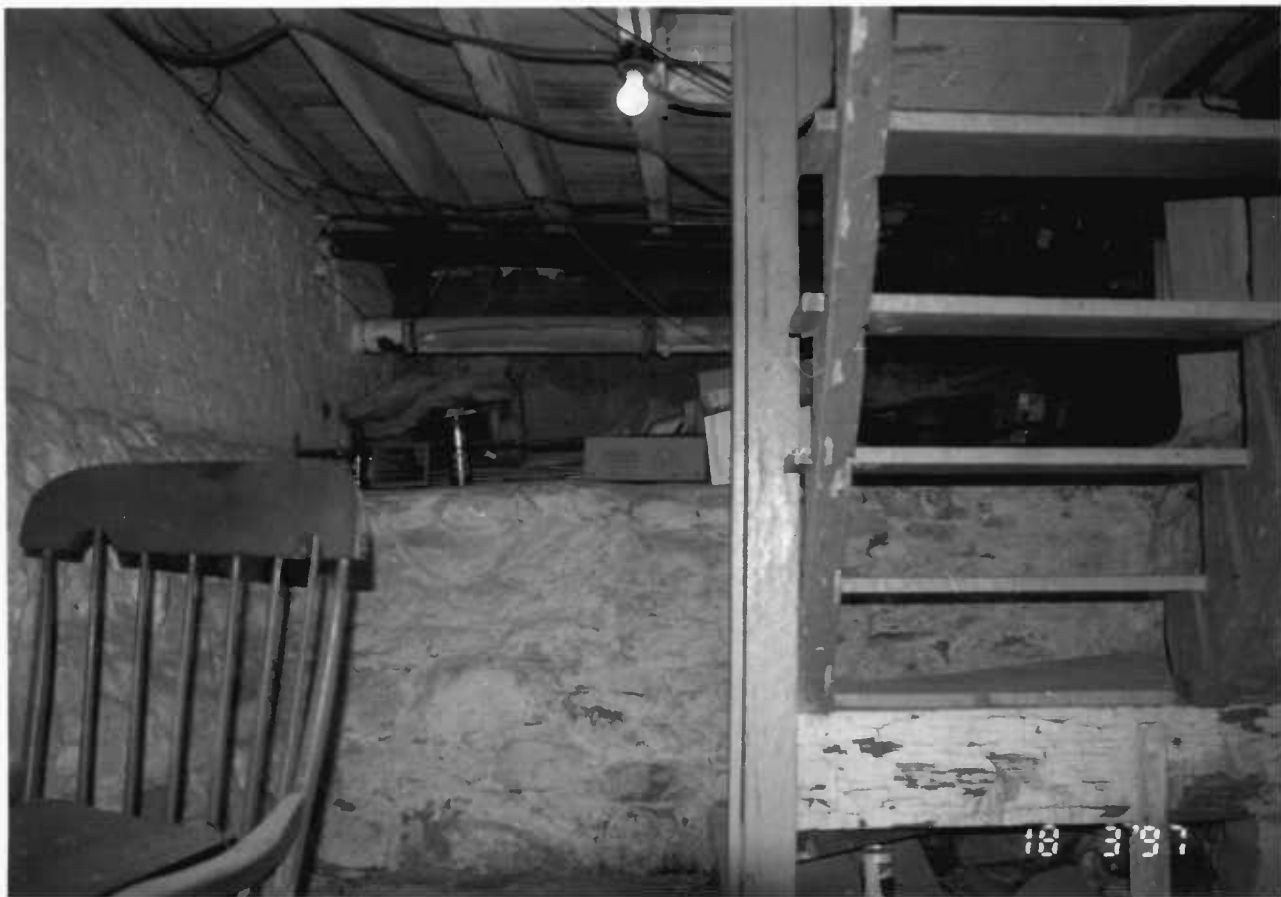
SHERRI M. MARSH, Photographer

MARCH, 1997

NEG. AT MD SHPD

BASEMENT; Gasoline-fueled machine  
used to supply gas for lighting

Photo 11 of 16



AA-948

FERRY POINT FARM

ANNE ARUNDEL CO., MARYLAND

SHERRI M. MARSH, Photographer

MARCH 1997

NEG. AT MARYLAND SHPO

6'-thick stone foundation wall

Photo 12 of 16



AA-948

FERRY POINT FARM

ANNE ARUNDEL CO., MARYLAND

Sherri M. Marsh, Photographer

MARCH 1997

NEG. AT MARYLAND SHPO

BASEMENT, CAMERA FACING S.E.

Photo 13 of 16



18 3'97

AA 948

Ferry Point Farm

ANNE ARUNDEL CO., MARYLAND

Sherri M Marsh, photographer

MARCH, 1997

NEG. AT MD SHPO

Attic Cistern

Photo 14 of 16





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FERRY POINT FARM

ANNE ARUNDEL CO., MARYLAND

SHERRI M. MARSH, PHOTOGRAPHER

MARCH, 1997

NEG. AT MD SAPO

CISTERN IN ATTIC

Photo 15 of 16



AA-948

FERRY POINT FARM

ANNE ARUNDEL CO., MARYLAND

SHERRI M. MARSH, photographer

MARCH, 1997

NEGATIVE AT MD SHPO

INTERNAL ROOM (Inaccessible)  
IN ATTIC

Photo 16 of 16